SHAFTESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1964

Medical Officer of Health: NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector: W. N. TEASDALE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June, 1965.

To The Mayor, Aldermen & Councillors,
Shaftesbury Borough Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1964.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Officers Regulations, 1959.

Allowing for the smallness of numbers under consideration the vital statistics compare favourably with those for the Country as a whole. With only thirty-seven deaths the comparative death rate was 8.4 (the lowest recorded in the Borough) compared with 11.3 for England and Wales as a whole.

There was no increased incidence of notifiable disease.

I am indebted to Mr. Teasdale, your Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk, Miss J. Shirley for her efficient services.

It always gives me pleasure to acknowledge, in my Annual Report, the courtesy and consideration which I have received from members of the Council during the year, but this year, being the twenty-fifth, during which I have had the privilege of serving your Council, I would like to extend my thanks to all who have made my association with the Council during this long time rewarding and pleasing.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

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SHAFTESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR

1 9 6 4

Area - 1,078 acres
Rateable value: 1st April 1965 - £134,930.
Production of a penny rate: 1964/65 - £528

Vital Statistics

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 3,440

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female		Comparative Rates (a) Shaftesbury Borough	(b) England & Wales
Total	46	20	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 16.3	20.3	18.4
Illegitimate	1	1			

STILLBIRTHS

Total	Nil	Nil	Rate per 1,000 live & still-births = Nil	Nil	16.3

DEATHS

Total	14	23	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 10.8	8.4	11.3

Deaths in Infants

Under 1 Year	Nil	2	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 30.3	30.3	20.0
Under 1 Week	Nil	2			

	1964	1963	1962	1961
Deaths from Maternal Causes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Tuberculosis	1	Nil	Nil	1
" " Cancer of the Lungs	2	1	2	2
" " Other Cancer	10	10	8	7
" " Coronary Disease(Angina)	7	10	5	15
" " Other Heart or Vascular disease	10	17	16	14
" " Influenza	Nil	1	1	1
" " Pneumonia	1	1	1	1
" " Motor vehicle accidents	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " All other accidents	Nil	1	1	Nil
" " Suicide	1	1	Nil	Nil
" " Leukaemia & Aleukemia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

B. Nature of the District

Shaftesbury is an ancient Borough with strong historical connections. It is a market town supplying the requirements of the farming community in the surrounding districts. Its principal industries and trades include glove making, and the local central depots for the Southern Electricity Board and Post Office Engineers are stationed there. A Government Radio Station is also within its boundaries. A laundry and egg packing station are recent acquisitions in the Borough. Plans are in hand for further industrial development.

C. Health Services in the District which are not the responsibility of the District Council

The Hospital Service

The Westminster Memorial Hospital of the Salisbury Group Management Committee of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board provides local hsopital facilities, both in-patient and out-patient.

Ambulance Service

The local ambulance service is provided by the County Council using the St. John Ambulance Brigade as its agent. An efficient service has been maintained throughout the year.

Laboratory Services

The laboratories at Dorchester and Salisbury of the Public Health Laboratory Service cover your district. The service has again proved in every way, to be co-operative and efficient.

General Medical Practitioner, Ophthalmic and Pharmaceutical Services

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

County Council Services

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the County Council.

They comprise, the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, prophylactic inoculations, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, the care and after care of the tuberculous, blind and handicapped, health education, the domestic help service and the welfare of the aged.

Voluntary Services

Acknowledgment must be made to the excellent voluntary work carried out in the district by the British Red Cross Society, the Silver Thread Club and the meals on wheels service provided by the W.V.S.

At the end of the year twenty three elderly people were benefitting from this valuable service. Not only are the meals appreciated, but even more (one sometimes thinks) are the twice weekly visits by the helpers who take the meals around.

D. Environmental Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (Part time) - Noel F. Pearson M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset Area and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is something less than one half day per week.

Dr. G.B. Hopkins of the Blandford and Wimborne Districts acts as his deputy during his absence, on a reciprocal basis.

Public Health Inspector (Part time) - William Norman Teasdale, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., Certificate of R.S.H. and P.I.E.J.B. Certificate of R.S.H. as Inspector of Meat and other Foods.

Technical Assistant (Part time) - Phillip Stroud, (until 30.6.64)

WATER SUPPLY

All properties in the Borough are served by a public water supply with the exception of one property having a satisfactory private supply. Twenty-one properties (thirty four persons) are, however, still served by standpipe supplies.

The public supply is provided by the West Wilts Water Board. Close co-operation has been maintained between officers of your Council and those of the Board.

Regular sampling of the supply at source, by the Board and, in the course of distribution, by your officers has been carried out.

The supply has been satisfactory in quantity and quality throughout the year.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Certain extensions of the sewers were undertaken during 1964 by private developers as preliminaries to new housing estates with a view to them being taken over on completion by the Council as public sewers.

These involved a small estate of nine houses at French Mill Lane and the first instalment of the new Barton Hill Estate, in this case fifteen houses only to be served as an extension from the Crookhays sewer. The remainder of this large estate will require to be sewered from a main sewer through the new industrial estate. In addition, work has commenced on the Littledown Estate, the majority of which is sited in the Rural District area and where agreement has been reached with the Rual District Council for these houses to drain into the Borough sewers. In order not to jeopardise building in the Borough area and to prevent sur-charging of the existing sewers, a duplicate sewer has had to be constructed in Grosvenor Road.

Preliminary work is now proceeding for the surveying of the ground preparatory to laying new sewers in the Wincombe Lane area to take the first stage of the industrial development and the accompanying Council housing projects.

This increased development and further proposals for development have emphasised the deficiencies of the existing disposal system to such an extent that emergency measures had to be adopted in the spring to minimise the pollution of streams in the Holyrood Farm area. This work included complete overhaul of all the outlet sluices, the construction of new irrigation channels and a revision of the system of disposal by a rota of areas to be used.

Whilst this has improved the position and considerably reduced the pollution, it is by way of being a stop gap measure, and coupled with recurring troubles in the Enmore Green and Long Cross areas, has made it more imperative than ever that a new and larger sewage disposal works be constructed as early as possible. To this end, the Council have instructed their Consulting Engineers to prepare the necessary detailed drawings and forms for application to the Ministry for consent for the work to proceed. It is to be hoped that the construction work will commence during 1965.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

There has still been no change in the arrangements for the collection or disposal of refuse. The kerbside collection of dustbins remains, as ever, the same unsatisfactory method, with its accompanying liability to nuisance. Whilst every attempt is made to see that bins do not remain on pavements longer than necessary, the time schedule is frequently upset and where occupiers forget to put out the bins, the collection ceases to be weekly, or more time is spent going over ground already traversed. Insufficient consideration has been given to alternative methods, and in this case, cost seems to take precedence over public health requirements, to the detriment of the latter.

If the anticipated industrial and housing development takes place (with the increased rateable income) an excellent opportunity would arise to substitute the paper sack method of refuse collection for the dustbin method.

There is little doubt that the day will come when Local Authorities will have to adopt new methods in refuse collection and as far as your Borough is concerned this would be an appropriate time to consider the matter.

The same remarks, to a large extent, apply to the disposal. In spite of organisation of the very limited labour force, and of the work of the Rodent Officer and his staff, the mount of refuse gives rise to continual rat, fly and smoke nuisance. This mount does not improve the amenities of the area, but until definite arrangements are made with other local authorities for joint efforts to be made, to their mutual advantage, I can see no improvement in the nuisance, but on the contrary, a gradual worsening of it.

ROADSIDE SANITATION

No serious public health nuisances have occurred in your Borough from unsatisfactory roadside sanitation. There is one unofficial lay-by on A30 adjoining the refuse tip which enables it to have weekly attention.

RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION

Consultations have been held with Mr. Brayshaw of the Rivers Board on the prevailing conditions at Holyrood Farm, Enmore Green and Long Cross. Of these the most important are the conditions at Holyrood Farm, where the pollution has been alleviated for the moment. Enmore Green area is as bad as ever but there is little prospect of any improvement until the new sewage disposal system is in operation. To a lesser degree the same remarks apply to the Long Cross area.

SHOPS ACT

The Borough Council is the responsible Authority for the administration of the Shops Act, 1950 within the Borough.

No. of inspections carried out	108
No. of defects found	10
No. of notices served	6
No. of notices complied with	6

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 (Nil figures not given)

	No. of premises on Register.	Inspections.
(i) Factories in which sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	26	61
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises).	8	20
Total -	34	81

No. of cases in which defects were -	Found	Remedied
Want of Cleanliness	2	2
Sanitary Conveniences		
Insufficient	-	-
Unsuitable or Defective	2	2
Total -	4	4

No. of Outworkers (Wearing Apparel) - 51.

OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

This important public health measure came into operation during the year. Surprisingly, unlike other Acts designed to improve the environmental condition of persons or employees, e.g. the Public Health

Acts or the Factory Acts, public health inspectors, as such, were not referred to in the Act, nor was any specific duty placed on the medical officers of health.

Nevertheless, under a medical officers general statutory duty to comment in this report on 'any other matters on which he may consider it desirable to report....' I feel that it is not inappropriate to comment on the working of this Act in your district.

By the end of the year no inspectors had been appointed under the Act or inspections carried out.

THE CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

No action was called for or taken during the year.

RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ACT

No premises in the Borough are registered under this Act.

SWIMMING BATHS

There is one public swimming bath in the Borough provided by the Council.

The bacterial purity of the water remained good throughout the warm summer, all samples taken showing a nil reading as far as B. Coli were concerned. In spite of this the Ph. value of the water remained consistently high, due firstly to the hardness of the water and secondly, it is surmised, to the use of cement paint for the colouring and water proofing of the bath walls.

In addition, the method of filtration is inadequate for the proper filtration and water change daily. Estimates have been received for the installation of larger pumps and efficient mechanised filters, but because of cost, this installation has not been accepted for the time being.

In order to overcome the high alkalinity, it has been decided to scrape off the accumulation of cement paint and to treat the sides and bottom of the bath with chlorinated rubber paint and to re-render the floor of the pool. It is hoped that this may counteract the tendency of the water to become very turbid, and offset the danger of persons not being seen under water.

THE CONTROL OF MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

There are no licensed caravan sites in the Borough.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

No action was called for or taken, during the year.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The duties of the Council under the above Act are carried out in the district by the North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee.

Co-operation with Officers of the Committee has been well maintained and their work is much appreciated. The fact that complaints of infestation are so few and far between is an excellent recommendation for the work of prevention which is being carried out. In fact, so effective is the scheme that the results are in danger of being taken for granted.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

No premises in the Borough are registered or licensed under this Act.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

No premises in the Borough are registered or licensed under this Act.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT ACT, 1963

There are no premises registered under this Act in the district.

Under the Act, with certain limited exceptions, any person who carries on a business of providing accommodation for other people's animals, even in a private house, must be registered under this Act, by the Borough Council.

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS)

The standard of hygiene is generally high in the secondary schools canteens and boarding houses.

There is still room for improvement in sanitary conditions of the primary schools, although there are signs that this may be effected through the plans for the building of a new Shaftesbury Junior School at Mampitts Road, and the improvement and extensions of St. James Junior School.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 & 1951 - Section 47

One instance occurred during the year when action had to be initiated with a view to obtaining a Court Order for the compulsory removal of one aged lady, who could no longer continue to live at home and who was being a serious nuisance to other persons. Before formal action had to be pursued the lady, voluntarily entered a nursing home.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

There are two sets of public conveniences in the Borough.

At the Bleke Street recreation ground one for women only. At the Town Hall (part underground) provision is made for men and women, the women's portion being provided with washing facilities, cold water with soap and paper towels.

An additional convenience for both sexes is urgently required at the Coppice Street car park.

Much as one would like to see all the conveniences provided with adequate washing facilities in the interests of personal and food hygiene, one hesitates to advocate expenditure in this direction so long as the vandalism so often occurring at the conveniences, persists.

HOUSING

Efforts to deal with sub-standard houses in the town are fated to meet with little success until new houses are provided by the Council to re-house the occupants.

Apart from eleven old peoples homes built in 1955, only nine new houses have been built by the Council in thirteen years, and, as private owners appear to be providing less and less houses to let every year, the only authority in a position to provide such houses is the Local Authority.

At the moment there is little encouragement to seek to improve housing conditions as replacements are not available, as shown by the fact that persons living in houses made subject to demolition orders, years ago, are still living in the same house under the same or worsening conditions.

The only improvement taking place occurs in the few cases where owner-occupiers apply for and obtain improvement grants. In 1964, these numbered seven showing a decrease of five over 1963 emphasising the general trend of gradual decrease as less existing houses become available for purchase and consequent improvement by owner-occupiers.

It is to be hoped that the draft Town Map and the commencement of new industrial development with its accompanying new housing projects will infuse new life into the housing conditions of the Borough and give some fresh impetus to the improvement of sub-standard houses in the area.

House Inspections

Total No. of houses in the district	1,223
Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -	
Total No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year	278
No. of inspections made	435
No. of informal notices served	52
No. of informal notices complied with	41
No. of statutory notices served	Nil
No. of statutory notices complied with	Nil
No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1958	Nil
Action taken by the Local Authority in respect of such houses -	
Demolition Orders made	Nil
Undertakings accepted for -	
Closure	Nil
Reconditioning	Nil
Other Action	2
No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year	Nil

A succesful prosecution was taken in the Magistrates Court against the failure of an owner to abate a nuisance in respect to one house in the Borough. On appeal to Quarter Sessions the abatement order was upheld.

Overcrowding

No cases of statutory overcrowding were brought to the notice of the Council during the year.

Houses Let In Lodgings

No houses in the Borough are known to be let in lodgings.

Rehousing

Thirteen families were rehoused by the Council during the year, compared with sixteen during the preceding year.

New Housing

Twenty four new dwellings were provided during the year by private enterprise, none by the Council.

Housing Applications

At the end of the year there were eighty three applications accepted on the Council's housing waiting list, of which fifty seven were resident in the Borough and twenty six resident outside the Borough.

Improvement Grants

Four applications for 'standard' and three for 'discretionary' grants were received during the year, compared with four and eight respectively in the preceding year.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Milk

Milk & Dairies(General)Regulations, 1959

No. of 'Dealers' subject to registration by the District Council	5
No. of 'Dairies' in the district subject to registration	Nil
No. of 'Distributors' subject to registration	7

Samples

Twelve samples of milk from the Borough were taken and submitted for examination duringthe year by officers of the County Council. None by officers of the Borough Council.

Brucellosis

No samples were taken specifically for examination for Brucellosis.

Milk & Dairies (General)Regulations, 1959 - Regulation 20.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

Other Food Premises

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business:-

Hotels, restaurants, cafes and boarding houses	28
Canteens - School and workplace	9
Confectioners	5
Meat and Fish	7
Grocers	9
Mixed Stores	3
Boarding Schools and other residential institutions	2
Food factories	2
Stalls	-
Other	5

No. of above subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955 in respect of -

Ice Cream	16
Sausages & Prepared Meats	3
Fish and Chips	2

No. of samples of ice cream submitted for Methylene Blue Test Nil

No. of premises inspected during the year 60

No. of inspections carried out 272

Food Inspection

Food Shops and Other Premises

The total quantity of foodstuffs condemned during the year was 145 lbs.

LIQUID EGG (PASTEURISATION) REGULATIONS, 1963

There are no pasteurisation plants in the Borough and no samples of liquid egg have been taken for examination.

Slaughterhouses

There is no slaughterhouse, now, in the Borough.

At this point, I would like to pay tribute to the speed and efficiency with which the Public Health Inspector contacted all appropriate premises and withdrew from sale the only suspected tin of corned beef in the Borough at the time of the Aberdeen outbreak of typhoid fever. All enquiries and action were completed within twenty-four hours.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS (INCLUDING HOUSING) CARRIED OUT

Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	3,065
Total No. of informal notices served	283
Total No. of informal notices complied with	261
Total No. of statutory notices served	3
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	2
No. of prosecutions	1

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis -

Disease	Total Cases Notified
Whooping Cough	1
Meningoccal Infection	1
Measles	10
Pneumonia	3

Tuberculosis -

New Cases Notified	
Respiratory	Non-Respiratory
1	-

Food Poisoning -

There were two cases of food poisoning notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON
Medical Officer of Health.